



K A N S A S

JACK ALEXANDER
FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICE OF THE KANSAS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Its time to “Change Your Clock Change Your Battery” on April 2nd, 2006.

Its time to spring forward with Daylight Savings time on Sunday morning April 2, 2006 at 2 am. It’s also important to encourage everyone with battery operated smoke alarms to change the battery in them at this time. The practice of making sure homes have a working smoke alarm can dramatically reduce the loss of life due to fire. State Fire Marshal Jack Alexander urges all Kansan’s to adopt this life saving habit and to practice home fire drills to be certain everyone is familiar with the smoke alarm signal and to determine a safe and quick evacuation.

The National Fire Protection Association survey found that 96% of the households had at least one smoke alarm. In one-quarter of the reported fires in homes equipped with smoke alarms, the devices did not work. Households with non-working smoke alarms now outnumber those with no smoke alarms. Why do smoke alarms fail? Most often because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries. It is also important that smoke alarms be replaced every 10 years.

Here are some tips for installing and maintaining your smoke alarm:

- Choose a smoke alarm that bears the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside all sleeping areas.
- For added safety, install smoke alarms in every room where people sleep.
- To increase safety, have a qualified electrician install hard-wired, interconnected smoke alarms so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Install a new battery in all smoke alarms at least once a year. Install a new battery immediately if an alarm “chirps” to indicate a low battery.
- Replace smoke alarms that use extended-life, lithium batteries when the alarm “chirps” or fails to respond to periodic testing. The batteries in these units cannot be replaced.

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- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Use the test button, or an approved smoke substitute, and clean the units, according to manufacturer’s instructions. Do not use an open-flame device to test the alarm.
- Special smoke alarms are made for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These alarms use strobe lights. Vibrating devices may also help in some cases.

Other fire safety tips:

- Check flashlight batteries. Always keep a working flashlight near your bed, in the kitchen, basement, and family room. Not only will this help you signal for help in the event of a fire but can be used during other emergencies such as storms or power outages.
- Install fire extinguishers in or near your kitchen and know how to use it.
- Make sure your children know and understand fire safety. Children are at double the risk of dying in a home fire, because they often become scared and confused during fires. Show your children where smoke alarms are located and that they recognize the sound.
- Plan and practice your escapes routes. Identify at least two different escapes routes and practice them with the entire family.